

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Markey: IRS ChoicePoint Contract is ‘No Choice’ for Taxpayers

Data Brokers to Receive \$20 million IRS Contract

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA), co-chair of the Congressional Privacy Caucus made the following statement in response to ChoicePoint Inc.’s announcement that the company received a \$20 million contract from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to process public records.

“It is disturbing that an agency as critical to data privacy as the IRS would choose this moment to hand over sensitive data to a company which is under a cloud due to prior security breaches. The IRS decision to give this contract to ChoicePoint leaves taxpayers with no choice about where their tax information and personal data will travel. As one of the nation’s largest data profilers and brokers, ChoicePoint has made a series of voluntary changes in order to reassure the public about its security. These voluntary moves, however, need to be reinforced by mandatory legislation that imposes real penalties for mishandling of personal data. The Government Accountability Office recently demonstrated the vulnerability of the IRS data base to hackers. Clearly, the IRS should be spending less time facilitating the outsourcing of its data processing to third parties and more time constructing in-house its own capabilities to process data securely without resort to third parties.”

For more information on Rep. Markey’s legislation to protect consumer privacy check out:
<http://www.house.gov/markey/>